621 Each member of this small community knows every other member well, his virtues, his faults, his little foibles and idiosyncrasies, and it is within these groups that one finds the choicest bits of gossip. Every native is identified with a certain hamlet as well as village. Thus, he is a man from Penguli, or Ponembatawa, as well as a member of the village of Lesu. His deepest roots are in the hamlet, and when he dies it is to the cemetery of the hamlet in which he was born that he is brought to be buried. As matrilocal [591 764] residence is the rule, a man is frequently buried in a hamlet other than that in which he was living.[1]

592 The next smallest grouping according to locality is the household, which corresponds, in general, to the individual family, consisting of parents and children. Should a man have two wives, each wife will usually have her own house, although if there is a great difference in their ages, one being very old and decrepit, they frequently occupy the same house. The unmarried men and the boys, after the [513] age of nine or ten, sleep in the men's house. There is no girls' house corresponding to the men's house, and the girls sleep at home until they are married. The usual occupants of each house are thus, the husband and wife, the female unmarried children, and young male children. But even though the older boys may sleep at the men's house, they participate in the life of the household. Just as each hamlet

103 578 [1] In the past, before white contact, the hamlets of Lesu formed two villages. The present six hamlets at the northern end (Simbelmalum, Ponamsambuat, Ponembwam, Ponembatawa, Ponmeniliasau, and Ponatlege) were known as the village of Tagam, and the remaining nine hamlets (Onel, Panat, Logok, Pantes, Penguli, Tarengam, Pencil, Sapone, Penbumbu) were the Lesu village. Each had their own chief, and there was constant fighting caused by thefts of women and pigs between the two villages. While war has been abolished and the two villages are now united, a certain division is still maintained between [304] them. For instance, the boys of Tagam are still circumcised separately from the boys of Lesu. The members of the two places attend each other's rites, but there is no really close intimacy between them.

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incumbent of the post, seem to have been important factors in the choice. However, to-day warfare has been abolished by the white Government, the warrior chief no longer exists, and it is therefore difficult to get exact information on his role. But some idea of the type of warfare, which appears to have been on a rather small scale, may be gathered from a tale of fighting between Lesu and Tagam, the two former villages now making up Lesu. The people of Lesu were considered the best fighters of the two, and the Tagam people were much afraid of them. Because of their fear, Tagam members ran away to the village of Fakmalak, and while they were gone the Lesu people stole taro from the Tagam gardens and their pigs. This went on for some time, until the Lesu people notified the Tagam people, hiding at Fakmalak, that they were ready to make peace. Accordingly the Tagam people returned and there was an exchange of *tsera* (currency) between the two. (This is the first rite in peace-making.)

The day after their return the Tagam people went to their gardens in the bush, but their chief, Seiut, stayed at home in order to make a *kepkep* (breast ornament). The Lesu people, who were not honest in their talk about peace, now sent two men to kill Seiut. They came to his house and said that they would like to watch him work on the *kepkep*. He invited them in, and they killed him by cutting his head open and slashing his body. A few of the Tagam people, who remained at home, beat the *kolamuth* (hollowed tree-trunk used as a signalling drum), and the others returned from their gardens. When they found their chief dead, they were again afraid and wanted to run away back to Fakmalak. But Lemlum, the Lesu chief, said that now they had attained their object in killing Seiut, and that they were willing to have real peace. A big feast was made by the Lesu people, who gave uncooked taro and pig to the Tagam people. Another exchange of *tsera* also took place, followed by ritual

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578 dancing in which both villages and other neighbouring ones participated. A year later Tagam gave a return feast to Lesu. Seiut's younger brother, Sagari, became the new chief for Tagam.

624 648 554 888 To-day, in each village the white Government appoints a man called "Luluai," who acts as an intermediary between the natives and Government officials. In some villages the "Luluai" is a man of outstanding personality, from the family of the former fighting chief, or an *orang* of his clan and a man of real influence in the village. In other villages the choice of a "Luluai" may not be so fortunate. But even when he is a man of influence and strong personality, it is still the important old men of the clan who are the real rulers of the community. The "Luluai," if he is only a middle-aged man, is guided by them on any matter of importance.

THE FAMILY

593 The smallest unit based on kinship is the family, which cuts directly across the moiety and clan, since the father, as has been previously stated, is always of a different clan and moiety from those of his wife and children. On some occasions, when the clan functions as a unit, this division is brought out very clearly, as at the wedding rites of a daughter, when the mother and her clan relatives are active and the father is in the background. But, as a whole, the

593 428 611 ties of sentiment which develop in family life are not severed. For instance, although the rule for the inheritance of property as well as status is that it comes through the female line, the former frequently comes down through the male line. Inheritance of property and of status are in quite different categories. The rule concerning status is inviolable. A child is always a member of his mother's clan and moiety. But a child may receive magical spells from his father as well as from his mother's brother or mother. Although a native informant will always tell you that the latter is the

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rule, in reality, when one studies concrete cases, as much magic is inherited in the male as in the female line. For the inheritance of property, including magic, the rule is not rigid and family sentiments frequently override clan rules.

Moreover, despite the cross-secting lines of the clan, the family has a decidedly unified life. It is the husband who clears the bush ground for cultivation, while his wife plants taro. It is he who fishes and brings the larger part of the catch to his wife. She prepares the taro for the evening meal, which they and the children enjoy together, apart from the rest of the hamlet. The mother nurses her infant, and her husband quite frequently takes care of him while she is busy in the garden, or with her cooking. By co-operation in the infinite number of details which comprise family life, the unity of the family is maintained. Finally, a man and his wife have a close affectionate and sexual life, although extra-marital intercourse is rather usual. Even wife-beating, which may cause a temporary rift, serves at the same time to assert the unity of the family; a man never beats his mistress.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP SYSTEM

The kinship groups of moiety, clan, and family having been briefly sketched, it remains to describe in more detail the classificatory system of kinship. The distinctive element of any such system is that a single relationship term is applied to a large group of people and not just to one or a few individuals. The division of the society into two totemic, exogamous moieties has been noted, and the range of kinship terminology is the moiety, all the members of which are considered to be related. If, first, the principles of the system within the immediate family are grasped, it is easy to follow the more complicated extensions. The accompanying diagram of a genealogy helps to illustrate the points.

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and thus their education is begun in the observance of those activities, in which they will later participate. Occasionally they carry small, light articles, such as a basket for taro, from the house to the beach for their parents. The world of early childhood is composed of adults and older children, both of whom stand in the role of protectors, and the parents have the additional role of disciplinarians.

It is in this early period, following infancy, that parental discipline begins. If these young children are disobedient, they are spanked. Quite early the youngsters are told to go to their respective places (according to their sex) to defecate. When an infant who cannot walk defecates in public, the faeces are quickly covered with sand. But as soon as the child can walk about by himself he is supposed to go to his proper place. But accidents often happen, and not infrequently the young child urinates on the beach or in front of the house. He appears to have no embarrassment about it, and is interested in his own act, but not in that of another child. If observed by his mother the child is spanked or scolded, or perhaps both.

Children are early taught to obey the instructions of their parents. Linga, a little girl of about four, was told to throw some leaves left over from the cooking into the sea. She did not do it, and her mother slapped her face. She cried. Later her father, Tukan, took her to a tree where another man threw some of the fruit down to her. She returned, clinging affectionately to her father's hand. It is usual that if one parent quarrels with the child, the other will take the child's part. And this applies not only to parents but to other relatives, and a parent takes his child's side should the latter be chided by another relative. One day a child of about seven was struck by one of his clan relatives because he would not give him betel-nut when requested. The mother was absent when the incident occurred. She and her sister returned and found the child crying, and learning the cause

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of the tears, the two women each took a branch of a small tree and fought the man who had struck the child. The other members of the hamlet thought that the man got what he deserved.

Another time, Bak, a little girl of about ten, took some leaves from Bolut's banana tree, and he scolded her because he thought the destruction of the leaves would weaken his tree. Bak's adopted mother, Brakko, with whom she lived, took her part. Brakko had recently given Bolut some bananas for a feast which he was to hold in the near future. When she heard of the scolding he had given her adopted daughter, she remarked to a group of people, "Ah, yes, he scolds Bak, but why did he take my bananas to his hamlet then?" The remark was promptly carried to Bolut, and he as promptly returned the bananas. Brakko had taken Bak's part by her allusion to Bolut's having accepted a gift from her. Bolut's feelings had been hurt by this allusion, and he vindicated himself by returning the gift. The incident was soon forgotten. In most personal quarrels with his adult relatives the child does not lack a defender. On the other hand, when the children offend the whole community, there is no defence for them. Some youngsters picked unripe fruit from a tree, and all the adults of the hamlet who were present, male and female, scolded the children, who hurriedly ran back to the bush and threw the unripe fruit away.

Just one manner of frightening children was observed. It is done with a leaf called *grippo*, which is linked with ghosts who are feared by everyone. The leaf is waved in front of the child and an allusion made to ghosts. I was unable to get any further information on it. When observing the children's fear of this leaf, it seemed to me that it was similar to the fear a child in our society will sometimes have of a feather. The use of the leaf in this connection was not very frequent, and the frightening of the children by connecting the leaf with ghosts was half playful.

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The mothers of the Eagle boys contributed eight *tsera*, which was distributed to the clan relatives of the Hawk boys. Their mothers also contributed eight *tsera*, which was given to the clan relatives of the Eagle boys (see Chapter IV, pp. 112–113.

There are also reciprocal gifts between individuals which have no relation to the moiety structure. In case of a quarrel the rift is mended by an exchange of exact amounts of *tsera*. For instance, there was a quarrel between Brakko and Manumat, who live in different hamlets. Brakko is the daughter of a former chief, now dead, and one of the leading women of the community. Manumat is one of the middle-aged men of the village. Manumat's sister is away working on a plantation on another island, and sent a message to Sigar, a woman of Brakko's hamlet, to come and work there also. Sigar goes and Brakko is very angry, and wants to know who will look after Sigar's garden. The women of the hamlet are very busy and Sigar's departure has upset their work. Brakko's anger is directed against Manumat (Sigar's brother) and angry words are exchanged between them. Their quarrel is witnessed by many of the villagers, who rush to see it, which is in contrast to their polite indifference to quarrels between husband and wife. A few days later Manumat gives Brakko five *tsera* and she gives him another five *tsera*. This reciprocal exchange ends the quarrel, although the final conclusion is not till a month later, when there is a feast, for which Manumat provides the pig. It is assumed that he has been the one to blame, or at least his sister, whose blame he takes.

Then there are reciprocal gifts for which there is no ritual or any other reason, as far as can be observed. These gifts are a portion of a pig. At the usual feast all the pigs are not consumed, and a head, or hind quarter, or some other fairly large portion of the animal, is given by the owner to someone present. This may be a return gift for a similar present which

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saying that his clan relatives from Tabar have assisted him very materially in these rites. One long piece of *tsera*, several units, is given to a Tabar man in payment for a pig. After this the bundles of taro are opened and the two pigs cut up and distributed.

This feast marks the final payment of *tsera*. Though most of it is given to Palou, it is considered as being given also to Towi and Tukan, and it is understood that Palou will distribute it to them. Palou is the important old man of the Sinpop clan, and Tukan is his maternal nephew, and hence also of his clan. Towi is married to a Sinpop woman, and has a claim on the payment because his son, who died some years ago, was Sinpop, and if alive would be part-owner of the *malanggan* and receiver of part of the payment. Towi, his father, now acts as a sort of deputy for him. Of course, Towi's wife is Sinpop too, but in discussing it the natives do not mention her, but stress the fact that it is for the son that Towi is acting.

The total payment is 180 *tsera*, besides much tobacco and many loin-cloths. At the native rate of exchange, one *tsera* equalling five shillings, this is equal to £45 in Australian currency, or $225. Of this 140 *tsera* is paid to Palou of Penguli, while the remainder is paid to Tabar people who contributed pigs and helped in other ways. At Logagon Palou immediately distributes thirty of the *tsera* to thirteen people from Penguli, men and women who have helped him in the preparations. The individual payments range from one to five. Palou gives thirty more *tsera* to his own three children, to a maternal niece (sister's daughter), and to another sister's daughter's daughter. These five recipients of *tsera* are all members of the Sinpop clan. The remainder is supposed to belong to Palou, Towi, and Tukan.

After Palou has made the distribution at Logagon, Tukan and a few others are cross because they do not think he has paid them adequately. The dissatisfaction is felt particularly

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by Tukan, and he and four or five others, who are also discontented, go back to Lesu several days before the rest. The situation never comes to a climax, and there is no open quarrel between Palou and Tukan; there is not even an exchange of words. Palou is Tukan's *tata*, mother's brother, and this relationship forbids Tukan from expressing his feelings of anger. His resentment has to be repressed and his only recourse is to leave. But if it had not been for this relationship there would have been an outspoken quarrel and probably a fight. In discussing the matter with the natives, it is interesting to note that they are fully aware of the principle that the anger is worse because it cannot be expressed, and this idea comes out quite spontaneously from them when they talk about the matter. Later, after all the Penguli people have returned to their own hamlet, Palou gives Tukan some additional *tsera*, and the matter is ended. Tukan himself, in talking it over with me afterwards, says that it was just a little dispute, because Palou is his maternal uncle; otherwise, he adds, it might have been a big quarrel.

Resuming the description of the concluding rites, which are held on the day after the final payments have been made, the women are busy scraping taro and with other usual cooking preparations for a feast. The Lesu women work with the Logagon women, although all along they have sat in separate groups. However, the Lesu women have been very sociable with the women of this village, and tell me that they get very little sleep, because they spend most of the night talking with the Logagon women. But despite this sociability they do not feel so very much at home, and say that they are tired and a bit homesick. They are anxious to get back to Lesu and their gardens, about which they are worried. However, they industriously continue with the preparations for the morrow's rites.

In the evening the men, women, and children participate in a dance at the same time. (This is the first time I witnessed

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Wife number one has a certain precedence over the other. When the husband returns from fishing he gives the fish to wife number one, who then divides it with wife number two. The same order is followed with baked pig, or any other food which the husband brings home from a feast. Number one will always give half the food to number two, but the former would be very angry and feel insulted if her husband should not give the food to her first.

A woman may also have two husbands, known as husband number one (*tamuth towanmaga*, man first time) and number two (*tamuth inil*, man later), in the order in which she has acquired them. She calls both of them *nunga malis*, my husband. There is no evidence of a woman ever having more than two husbands at one time. Number one makes the marriage payment to his wife's maternal relatives in the traditional manner. Number two, however, pays the *tsera* to number one and not to his wife's clan relatives. Should husband number one die, number two will stay on with the woman and make no additional payment to her clan relatives. It is considered that the payment is finished when he pays number one at the beginning of the marriage.

Both husbands bring the woman fish, pig, etc., and she cooks for each one. The three eat together, the two men with the bundle of taro between them and the woman close by. Sometimes the three sleep in the same house, three beds in a row, and the woman between the two men. At other times husband number two will sleep in the men's house, and the woman will sleep with her husbands alternately. There appears to be no quarrelling between the two men. The children of the woman call both men *mum* (father). In the past these polyandrous marriages were the exception rather than the rule, and there is only one such marriage in Lesu now. The first husband died during my visit, and the second then became husband number one.

Monogamous marriages also existed in the past, and

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Another spell:

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Gulelin m diguri unali twang ni umtawangni

I will hang by the neck unless you get up and come to me.

There are also several rites unconnected with any spell. A woman will smear some blood from her breast, which she purposely cuts, on a baked taro and give it to a man to eat. He eats it unknowingly, and then desires her.

Or a woman may take some hair from her armpits and put it on a baked taro, which she then gives to the man to eat. After that he likes her.

The spells recited by the women are of quite a different nature from those used by the men. The latter are all concerned with their effect on making the woman's abdomen (the seat of her emotions) desire the man, while those which the women recite are much simpler, and are not concerned with the abdomen. They merely wish that her straw apron, or her dancing, or a banana over which a spell has been made, will make the man follow her. The love magic used by the women is considered subsidiary to that used by the men, which is the fundamental or principal love magic.

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There is also magic of revenge for a jilted lover. At sunrise, or just before, the jilted man rolls a *tsil* leaf in his hand and ties it in a knot. He hides near the house of the woman and watches where she urinates. Then he goes to this place and passes the knotted leaf through the woman's urine which has been deposited there. Now the leaf is put in the cemetery and left there for the day. The next day he takes it to the bush and leaves it in one of the rain pools there. After a while the leaf will stink, as all the bush pools become stagnant in a short time. At the same time the woman's vagina will become sore and itch, so that she cannot

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754 work. Should the man repent and wish to make her well,
578 he takes the leaf out of the pool, throws it away, then makes a cut in the *beranot* tree, allowing the sap to run out. The woman then becomes better.[1]

Another magic spell of revenge made by a man whose advances to a woman have been turned down is directed against her when she becomes pregnant. He takes a piece of strong vine and knots it twice. This knotted rope is then stuck in the ground at the entrance either to the woman's house or garden. The woman walks unheedingly over it. Then the man takes the rope to his house, pulls the knots tighter, which indicates the death of the unborn child, and sometimes of the woman also, and hangs it from the ceiling where it catches the smoke from the fire. To counteract the effects of this rite the knots must be untied and the following spell said over white lime placed in half a coconut shell:

Tsabu beriga
Tsigi beriga.

Tsabu is the name of a plant which when cooked evaporates into nothing. The spell reads:

Tsabu, go quickly.

Child, go quickly.

§32 No native ever doubts the efficacy of love magic, or for that matter of any other magic. Its power is infallible, unless some other magician should make some counteractive magic. One old man before giving me his spells looked all around my house to make sure that one of my servants, a young woman, was not present. He explained that he did not want her to overhear his spells, for, he went on, he was an old man now and did not want any "affairs" or "trouble."

[1] The man who gave me this magic said that he had used it once and the woman against whom it was directed had become ill.

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593 and there is no rift in the family. However, others, who are
837 the exceptions rather than the rule, instead of taking the *tsera* fight the wife's lover. There is the same difference in the woman's attitude toward her husband's mistresses. Usually she acquiesces and there is no fuss. But an occasional woman fights another one who has been her husband's mistress. There are even different attitudes in the same individual. One woman told me that sometimes her husband is cross if she has a lover, and at other times he does not mind. The latter is his more usual attitude. If he is aware of the lover and is cross, the lover pays the *tsera* directly to him; at other times the lover gives it to the woman.

593 Jealousy thus exists, even though extra-marital relation-
837 ships are sanctioned by social custom. I witnessed several
578 jealous fights. One was between two women. Tungat, the husband of Kalumat, had for some time been having sexual relations with Matsuk, a middle-aged widow, who lives in the neighbouring village of Ambwa. She was pregnant, and said that Tungat was the father of her child. Kalumat heard of it and said she was going to Ambwa and fight Matsuk. She went, accompanied by five other Lesu women, but on arriving at the village the fight turned out to be merely a vocal one, and Kalumat announced that she was through with her husband, and would give him up to Matsuk, from whom she demanded *tsera*. There was a sharp exchange of words between the two women, but nothing really happened other than that, and Kalumat continued to live with her husband.

593 Another quarrel was between my own two servants.
578 Kuserek was jealous because her husband Sinbanimous
158 lingers on the beach near the place where all the women are filling up the bamboo stems with water. When he returned she flew into a temper and nagged him to such an extent that he was forced to beat her in order to make her keep quiet. Another time it appeared that he was jealous on her

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account. Ladawin, an unmarried youth of the village, was much around the cook-house, and, while he paid attention to Kuserek, he also seemed to be a very good friend of Sinbanimous. All appeared harmonious until one evening, when they and many others from the village were at my house singing songs which I was recording. The evening passed quietly, but at the end of it Sinbanimous grabbed a long knife (which I had given him) and dashed after Ladawin, who ran away as fast as he could. Kuserek and several people from the village ran after the two men in pursuit. They managed to catch up to Sinbanimous and take the knife from him. He returned, went to his house, and immediately fell sound asleep. I was then told that he had gone "mad" temporarily at intervals since childhood, and that these "fits" are attributable to his dead brother's spirit entering into him. He is supposed to be unconscious of what he does on these occasions. The next morning he said that he remembered nothing except that he ran after someone, but he could not recall the pretext. He was rather embarrassed by the whole incident, and did not wish to talk about it. It would seem that there might be some jealousy of Ladawin, even though it was unconscious.[1]

Another man, Lumaris, beat his wife because he was jealous and thought she was conferring favours on someone else.

Jealousy is a well-known motif in many folk-tales, as shown in the following:

> Two men make love magic to get two married women. The magic is successful, and the two women and their lovers go to the bush. After a while, when the women do not return from the bush, their husbands, armed with spears, go after them. They find the wives with their lovers and kill the latter. The two women go on

[1] This attack may have been in the nature of an epileptic equivalent.

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ahead to the village, while the husbands remain behind and cut up the bodies of the two dead men. They then strew the pieces on the footpath leading into the bush.

The next day the two women see the bones of their former lovers strewn on the footpath. They weep. Then they return home and commit suicide by hanging themselves. Pigs are killed, and the appropriate mortuary feast made by the matrilineal relatives.

It was Maredis who told me this tale, and she added afterwards that the women liked their lovers so much that when the latter died they wanted to die too. It thus illustrates attachment to a lover, as well as jealousy of a husband. The footpath on which the bones of the dead men were scattered is known to-day and was pointed out to me.

Another tale relates how two men, while out fishing, capture a sea-maiden and bring her to the men's house. She stays with them there, sleeping between the two men and having intercourse with both of them. The two wives of the men remain at their houses and knew nothing of the sea-maiden. They give the men baked taro, and the men give them some of the fish they catch, but not as much as usual.

One of the wives grows suspicious and sneaks down to the men's house, and pressing her ear to the wall hears the sea-maiden talk to the men. The wife returns and tells the other wife about it; then both women go secretly to the men's house and listen at the wall. Now they know that their husbands are sleeping with this other woman. They return to their own houses.

The next morning the two men tell the sea-maiden to remain hidden in the men's house, and, fastening the door behind them, they go with their wives to work in the gardens. The men are ignorant of the fact that their wives know about the sea-maiden. The wives

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bring taro back to the house while the men remain working in the gardens. The two women go to the men's house and find the sea-maiden hiding under the branch of a tree which the men had placed on top of her. The wives fight the sea-maiden, then go out, fasten the door, and set fire to the house. The sea-maiden is burned to death. The two men in the gardens smell the fire, and returning, find the men's house burned down. They ask their wives why they set fire to the house, and the women answer: "Ah, we know everything. Why have you hidden this woman from us?" Now the men really like their wives, but they pick up knives and kill them. Then a big mortuary feast is made.[1]

There are many other folk-tales in which men have mistresses and wives lovers, but in which there is no jealousy.

At Lesu social custom and attitude sanctions extra-marital intercourse, and accepts it as correct to such an extent that anyone not indulging in it would be considered abnormal and most unusual. This social attitude is a more

[1] Another tale concerns a woman with two husbands, one of whom is jealous. The woman shows a decided preference for one husband who has a lighter skin, to whom she gives the best food. She tells the darker-skinned one to go and eat with the pigs, and later further insults him by telling him to copulate with the pigs.

That night the two men plan to go fishing. The spurned husband lies and says that he is ill and cannot go out fishing, so the preferred mate starts out alone. The dark-skinned man then goes to the woman's house and, pretending that he is the other man, tells the woman to open the door. She does so, and is cross when she discovers who it really is that she has let into the house.

When the preferred mate returns from fishing and finds the other man in the house he is very angry and jealous and kills both him and the woman. Then the mortuary feast is made.

There is a similar tale of how the two wives of one man are jealous of a woman who has been formed out of the man's blood and who stands in the relationship of maternal niece to him. The wives insult her by telling her to eat the faeces of a pig, and the man then kills the wives in revenge. These tales are but a few in which jealousy figures as the leading, or at least one of the leading motifs.

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also on the sick woman were her daughter and her mother's sister (who stands in the relationship of mother to her, her own mother being dead). The other women of the hamlet, when not busy in their gardens or with their cooking, sat in front of the house where the ill woman was confined.

Gradually she improved. At the end of a week she walked slowly, with the aid of a bamboo pole, to her own house, just because she wanted to look at it. This was her home, to which she was strongly attached, so she desired to see it. But the little walk left her very short-winded. After she assured herself that everything was all right in her home she returned to the beach house, where she stayed for another week before going finally to her own house. At the end of a couple of weeks she had completely recovered, except for being rather short of breath, and was again at work in the garden.

When Nunda, an old woman, was ill, her husband, Towi, showed the same kind of affectionate care of his wife as did Ongas. In all the other cases of illness which I witnessed there was this same affectionate attitude between mates.

QUARRELS

Yet this does not prevent quarrels, which sometimes grow to wife-beating between these very same mates. For a husband to beat a wife is no uncommon incident, and it happens in the happiest of marriages. It is considered a normal part of married life, and, as one native man said (as a statement of fact rather than cynically), "Beating one's wife is the custom of marriage." I witnessed many domestic quarrels, and I heard about others. There is nothing secret or intimate about a family quarrel. It is usually noisy, and both seen and heard by anyone who happens to be in the neighbourhood. It causes no surprise, and is taken as a part of the daily routine. The incidents which give rise to them are generally

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593 578 the rather small irritable pricks which happen in families anywhere in the world.

Tsuk's husband quarrelled with her because she did not cook some food when he thought it should be cooked. He spoke some angry words to her, and then hit her. She cried, left her home—which is in the hamlet of Onel—and went to her mother's house in another hamlet, Ponatlege. I saw her there, and she said she would come home when her husband came to fetch her, but not before. He said (a few days after the quarrel) that he would eventually go and get her, but was not then ready to do so. About a week later he went after her and brought her home, and all was well. This is the routine of a quarrel between mates.

Kaptan has a reputation for quarrelling very frequently with his wife, Malala. Once another man gave Kaptan a pawpaw to keep in his house until it became ripe. Malala, not knowing about this arrangement, saw that the pawpaw was ripe and ate a portion of it. While she was eating it Kaptan came up and saw her and was very angry, because, he said, the pawpaw belonged to his friend Towi, and not to him. In his anger he slapped his wife across the face. She cried and made no attempt to hit back. Her father Niknik, and her brother (classificatory) Taupis, who live in the same hamlet, came to her rescue. Niknik hit Kaptan across the back, and Taupis punched him in the nose and mouth, causing the latter to bleed. Kaptan, angrier than ever, went to the bush village from which he originally came and said that he was through with his wife and would not return to her.

Later both Niknik and Taupis went after him and each offered him two *tsera* if he would return. He refused, and said that he would stay where he was and later marry another woman. On returning, Niknik and Taupis discussed the matter with Ongas, the Luluai, asking his advice. He suggested that Kaptan and Taupis fight again, and that

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Taupis allow Kaptan to hit him on the jaw and give him a bloody nose. In this way, said Ongas, there would be a reciprocity in blows. But Taupis refused this method of reconciliation. Then Ongas said he would talk to Kaptan and see what he could do. Ongas would like Kaptan to return to Lesu because he is such a good worker and a real help in communal undertakings.

About a week later Kaptan came back to Lesu and took from his wife's father and brother the *tsera* he had originally paid for her, and also a pig they had been keeping for him. He went away, saying that he would return later, but this his wife did not believe, for, she asked, "Why did he take the *tsera* and pig if he means to return?" She then came to stay with Maerabit, of the same clan and a classificatory maternal grandmother. Ongas, in the meantime, did his best to persuade Kaptan to return, and about a week later the latter did come back. He kept the returned marriage payment, which was considered as recompense for the blows he had received. The couple began living together again.

This, I was told, is not an orthodox quarrel according to Lesu custom. All the people concerned in it are from the bush, and a father and brother coming to the aid of a woman in a quarrel with her husband is a custom of the bush villages,[1] but not of the coast people. Here a brother would be "ashamed" to interfere, and a father also would take no part in the quarrel. A maternal uncle might interfere, but not necessarily so.

Kaptan and Malala do not live long in peace. He caught some fish one day but gave none to her. He gave two to Palou, one of her clan relatives, who in turn gave one to Malala. Kaptan saw her about to eat it and was furious

[1] There were formerly villages back in the hills, but most of the people have now come down to the coast. However, a few remnants of the bush villages still remain.

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and grabbed the fish from her, saying that it was not Palou's fish but his. Kaptan's action was contrary to all customary rules of conduct, as a man always gives part of his catch to his wife. After this quarrel Malala went again to stay with Maerabit, her classificatory maternal grandmother. Eventually the quarrel was patched up and once more they lived together. The village people, in discussing the domestic quarrels of this couple, say that it is a peculiar custom of Kaptan's and not theirs, "But," they continue with a shrug of their shoulders, "what can be done about it? He is the quarrelling kind." Since every possible incident is seized upon as a cause for a quarrel, Kaptan and Malala are obviously not well mated.

Tukan and Kuta, usually a rather amiable couple, whose house was diagonally across from mine, were heard shouting angrily at each other one day in their open compound. People passing by were politely unconcerned, and seemed to pay no attention to the quarrel. It appeared that Kuta gave her husband Tukan a half string of *tsera* to purchase some native tobacco to pay the women taking part in the *Grimisi* dance at Tsuros' first menstruation rites.[1] Tukan, on his way to buy the tobacco, stopped to eat at a feast at the far end of the village. He stayed a long time at the feast, and finally returned home without the tobacco.

Then Kuta was cross. She asked angrily why he did not get the tobacco, and he replied that he had stopped to eat. She took the *tsera* from him and said that now he need not get the tobacco at all. Furthermore, she continued, she would not go to the *Grimisi* dance rehearsals any more, nor would she participate in any way in the preparations for Tsuros' feast. Tsuros is of the same clan as Tukan, and the non-appearance of his wife at her rites would reflect unfavourably on her husband. This also seemed to satisfy the martyr spirit (for she enjoyed the dance rehearsals) so

[1] Described in Chapter V.

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frequently noticed in the women in quarrels with their husbands. 578 593

So she was absent from the nightly dance rehearsals. A few days later Tukan killed a bush pig and held a feast in Tsuros' hamlet, the purpose of which was to end the quarrel between himself and his wife. Although the feast was a masculine one which Kuta did not attend, it ended the quarrel. Then she joined in the dance rehearsals and took full part in the preparations for the feast.

Quarrels between my servants Sinbanimous and Kuserek have already been mentioned. Jealousy was the cause of most of them. Kuserek was angry and jealous one night, and began to nag Sinbanimous when he returned home from a dance rehearsal. Her jealousy appeared to be directed not against any one woman in particular, but just against women in general. (She seemed always to be jealous when Sinbanimous was out of her sight.) That night she nagged him a good bit, but finally they went to sleep. The next morning she began on the same theme and gave him no peace. Then she made him do what was usually her work in bringing my breakfast to the table. She in the meantime sat on the rear of my porch with another woman. They were making cat's cradle, and laughed rather insolently and very uproariously every time Sinbanimous passed by. Finally he could stand it no longer. He came out of the cook-house with a spoon in his hand and quickly hit her over the cheek with it. She began to cry. Several women came up and sided with Kuserek. Sinbanimous seemed very much alone, as all the men appeared disinterested. Kuserek packed her few belongings and went to the hamlet of Pombumbu, where it happened that her mother's sister was visiting. Before she went I suggested that I put a dressing on the cut in her cheek, but this she refused to have done. She seemed to get a certain pleasurable sensation of martyrdom in having everyone see the blood on her cheek.

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578 593 While she was away Sinbanimous told me that his anger was over as soon as he hit her. He added that there was only one way to stop her when she began nagging and that was to beat her. She would sulk for a couple of days, and then it would be over. In discussing it further Sinbanimous added that Kuserek was really a very fine girl, but there were times when he just didn't understand her, and wished she would not talk so much. A beating was the only thing she feared.

Kuserek stayed away overnight, but returned the next day. However, the quarrel was not yet over. She did not talk to her husband, and slept at her friend Pulong's house. She insisted upon doing my laundry, although there was ritual dancing at Ponatlege to which I knew she wanted to go. I told her it was not necessary to do the washing to-day, but she replied haughtily that she would do it anyway. I think that she was again indulging her feeling of being a martyr.

A few days later they started talking casually to each other, and that night they slept together. The quarrel was over.[1]

Quarrels and beatings occur even in the household of Ongas and Pulong, who seem to be a model of quiet, happy domesticity. Ongas went fishing one night and a fish bit his foot. When he came home he told his wife and daughter about it. They thought he was joking or fooling, and

[1] As a whole Sinbanimous and Kuserek are devoted to each other and get on quite well together, except for a quarrel which occurs about once a month. One fight was really quite violent. Sinbanimous hit Kuserek, and when he stopped she egged him on, calling him foul names and saying tauntingly that she was not afraid of him, and did he think he was a strong man, and even attempting to hit back. Thus provoked he beat her again. When he stopped she continued to provoke him further, and so it went on until he threw her through the frail bamboo wall of the cook-house. She was then too exhausted to irritate him more. Her eyes were bulging, and she was transformed by anger and temper. She left immediately and went to Tarengam, a hamlet where some distant maternal relatives lived and stayed with them. But in a few days' time she returned, and all was peaceful until the next time.

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laughed. He then became very cross (his foot was paining him at the same time) and hit Pulong, who fell down on the floor. The daughter ran to the mother, trying to protect her. Pulong cried, and then both she and her daughter left home and went to the house of a classificatory mother, where they stayed for several days. They then returned home, and Ongas offered them some pig. The happy family was reunited.

Thus does happy family life continue in its not always placid course. As we have seen, quarrels arise out of jealousy, irritation over some trifle, bad humour, and such other incidental causes, and the quarrels frequently lead to the beating of the wife by the husband. However, in no beating witnessed did the husband make full use of his strength. Each time he exercised a decided self-restraint in his blows. These provided an outlet for his anger, which thus soon vanished. The woman left home immediately, giving time for the emotional storm to blow over. The few days of absence offer quiet relief and time for each to recover from the disturbance. When she returns home the quarrel and the incident causing it are completely forgotten. The air is cleared; there is no sulking; peace again pervades the household. Seen in this setting (and from the point of view of a native) wife-beating seems to be a rather workable arrangement to maintain that equilibrium necessary in family life, and not a tyrannical act of unjust brute strength which those of our culture might imagine it to be. It must be remembered also that the wife has a way of punishing her husband, for she may expose him to ridicule in her speeches at various rites. At the marriage and birth feasts I listened to the women making speeches about the ability or lack of it that their husbands displayed in providing them with food. Ridicule was the sharp weapon directed against the lazy man.

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154 he is very much scared; he manages to free himself of the snake.

That the dreamer is trying to catch someone who is running away and to whom he never catches up.

That the dreamer is dancing.

That the dreamer climbs to the top of a tree, falls down, and dies. (This is a common form of suicide.)

That the dreamer is eaten by a pig.

That the dreamer (a man) kills another man, and that he then bathes in the sea and is eaten by a fish.

That his dead mother comes back and talks to him and says how she likes to look at him once more.

That the dreamer is embracing a person of the opposite sex.

That he is going to the island of Tabar in a canoe.

That he is standing on his head.

That he kills a phalanger.

That the dreamer is eating taro.

That the dreamer (a woman) is planting taro.

That the dreamer (a woman) is preparing the taro to be baked.

That the dreamer (a woman) is on the top of a tree by the sea.

Dream of a dead child.

Of the above dreams a man or woman is not ashamed, and an informant talked freely of them to me. However, I gather that for some reason, which I was unable to learn, the natives do not talk much about any dream to each other. On the surface, it would seem that they are just not interested in dreams, and also that they do not dream so very frequently, or do not remember them. However, these points would bear further investigation.

OBSCENITY

831 578 Insulting terms and obscene phrases used in quarrels are frequently concerned with the forbidden incestuous relationship and with relationship with pigs. The very worst expression you can fling at a man is *Umba kigi no matonga* (you copulate with your sister). Only a little bit less insulting is *Umba kigi no nangga* (you copulate with your mother). Very insulting also, and just a trifle less so, is the taunt

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Umba kigi no bul (you copulate with pig). If the first insult, the one concerned with the sister, is used, the man so taunted would feel obliged to kill his sister, but not the man who flung the taunt. But he does not kill his mother nor a pig, if taunts are made concerning them. Almost as insulting, but not quite in the same class, is *Umba oning tega tsinu bul* (you eat the faeces of the pig). This is considered a most humiliating taunt, and the incident occurs frequently in quarrels in folk-tales.[1]

Other obscene expressions used in angry quarrels refer directly to the sexual organs. Such expressions are: *Konum toktok* (red vagina), *Konum pung* (black vagina), *Konum wunwung* (open vagina), *Umba a lut* (you big penis), *Jitisit* (referring to the act of copulation). Another expression, *Umba bol* (you pig), is in the category of obscenity, although of a different nature. None of these expressions are used in everyday conversation, but are heard only when a person loses his temper in an angry quarrel. They appear to have a similar function to profanity and obscenity used in quarrels in our society, and serve as an outlet for the speaker's emotion. The above phrases are never used to be funny, or as part of a clever obscene story. They are meant as insults. In general one may refer to sexual matters quite openly in conversation, but one may not refer to the sexual life of a man in front of his sister or cross-cousin, or *vice versa*. That would be considered very shameful, and to a minor degree the same kind of shame is felt before an *onga* (sister's husband). There is one old man, Towi, however, who, contrary to all traditions, frequently refers to the sexual organs of a man whose sister is present. This man is then

[1] One tale tells how a woman and child were sitting on top of a *ilini* tree, and how, when the child defecated, the mother threw the faeces down on a man named Runatumna who was standing under the tree. He was so angry that he killed and ate the woman and child.

This is just one of many tales in which the throwing of faeces is regarded as a deadly insult.

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831 so ashamed that he has to make a payment of *tsera* to the
578 sister who has heard Towi's remarks. The payment seems to be a sort of compensation. Now Towi appears to think he is funny in talking like this, but no one else appreciates the fun. All the men are rather disgusted with him, who, they tell me, has had the habit ever since he was quite young. His brother Ballock follows him in this habit, but not to the same degree.

831 Various myths and folk-tales already given illustrate
539 several of the points under discussion. Others, too, have a sexual significance.

A man tells his wife that he is going fishing. He goes to the beach and puts his penis in the water. Then he comes back and eats with his wife. The next morning he goes to the beach again and his penis falls down into the water. (Laughter from the audience at this point of the tale.) Then the man stands in the shallow water and says: *Tnginidol tnginidol* (penis remain in sea). The penis is left in the water, and the man returns to the house. He lies to his wife and says he is ill.

The next day the man tells his wife to go to the garden while he goes fishing. The woman, who suspects something, pretends to go to the garden, but hides and follows her husband to the beach. He stands up again in the shallow water where his penis is and repeats the phrase *Tnginidol tnginidol*, and goes away. The wife has heard it, and after the man leaves she takes the penis out of the water, carries it home, and bakes it with a bundle of taro wrapped in a banana leaf.

Later the man goes to the beach and cannot find his penis. He cries out: "Who has taken my penis? By and by I will want to copulate and then my wife will see that I have no penis."

He goes home, and his wife gives him the bundle of